

# PUBLIC HEALTH CONNECTION

## Kittitas County Public Health Department (KCPHD) Responds to Jolly Mountain Fire

On August 29, the Kittitas County Commissioners declared a state of emergency in response to the Jolly Mountain Fire.

Upon activation of the Emergency Operation Center (EOC), Kittitas County Public Health assisted in the response. Several KCPHD staff participated at the EOC, from logistics to answering phones to public information.

In addition to assisting the EOC, KCPHD provided assistance around air quality. KCPHD provided messaging about air quality and recommendations based on the level of wildfire smoke for residents to avoid exposure. KCPHD provided masks to the public for free.

On September 6, KCPHD was requested to monitor indoor air quality as a result of wildfire smoke at local school districts. Based upon the internal air monitoring, Health Officer Dr. Mark Larson, made recommendations to Ellensburg, Kittitas, and Thorp school districts to close or delay the start of school.

When air quality levels reached beyond the “unhealthy for sensitive populations,” (unhealthy, very unhealthy, and hazardous), as they were in the identified schools, Dr. Larson recommended not exposing children to that level of air quality.

School districts responded by using air scrubbers, limiting access to buildings

by one entrance/exit only, and turning off air systems that brought in external air into the building.

“Our county responds very well to recommendations and makes changes according to air quality very well,” asserts Environmental Health Supervisor Holly Myers. “With a history of wildfires in the area, most people have become accustomed to making changes based on Washington State Department of Ecology’s air monitoring.”



*Holly Myers setting up an E-sampler air quality monitor. (Photo courtesy of the Daily Record)*

## 2017 Strategic Plan Updated

The 2015-2019 KCPHD Strategic Plan is currently being updated. As a result of the update, challenges and accomplishments have been identified. Challenges include shifting priorities, funding and resources, and monitoring and tracking of strategic plan implementation.

Some accomplishments include finding a new funding source for KCPHD, health insurance billing, implementation of a new fee calculation method, along with significant cross training of KCPHD staff.



Currently, management staff is reviewing the strategic initiatives that

were identified in 2015 and making recommended changes in addition to a meeting with key stakeholders to discuss revisions to the plan.

When the 2017 recommended changes are incorporated, the updated plan will be presented to all staff for feedback and finally, taken to the Kittitas County Board of Health for approval.

Strategic planning is a process that provides direction to the department and prioritizes decision making based on funding and resources.



**Department Wide**

New Grants /Fund Sources	3
Health Data Requests	3
Quality Improvement Projects	0
Health Provider Releases	4
Media Contacts	35
Community Engagements	188
Code/Policy Updates	9
Total Clinic Appointments	104
Volunteer Hours	250

**Vital Records**

Hospital Births Registered	81
Birth Certificates Issued	274
Deaths Registered	68
Death Certificates Issued	314

**Health Promotion**

Oral Health Outreach Contacts	255
Referrals to Dentists	15
Health Insurance Assists	42

**Communicable Disease (CD)**

CD Investigations	67
Confirmed CD Cases	25
STD's Reported	56
Tuberculosis Tests	23
HIV, Hepatitis C, STD Tests	15
Number of People Tested for HIV, Hepatitis C, STDs	9

**Immunizations**

Total Vaccinations Given	110
Flu Vaccinations Given	0
Specialty Travel Vaccinations	3
Adults Receiving Vaccinations	71
Children Receiving Vaccinations	16
Travel Consultations	3

**Harm Reduction Activities**

Syringe Exchange Participants	166
Number of Exchanges	66
Syringes Distributed	8155
Syringes Received	6514
Naloxone Kits Distributed	25
HIV/Hepatitis C Education Participants	41

**2017-2018 Community Health Assessment (CHA) Process**

The CHA Committee has finalized the 2017 Vision and Values, which are as follows:

All people in Kittitas County are supported in achieving health and well being.

**Equity:** All people have the resources and opportunities they need to lead a healthy life.

**Engagement:** All people are invested in the health of the community and participate in their own health outcomes.

**Empowerment:** All people have accurate and current information regarding individual and community

health, allowing them to make informed decisions.

**Safety:** All members of the community feel neither fear nor threat to their personal well-being.

**Collaboration:** All people make Kittitas County safe and healthy by working together to coordinate services.

**Sustainability:** Policies, programs and services are designed to create long term solutions for health.

**Growth:** Resources that support healthy choices are consistently provided

throughout the lifespan of all people.

**Prevention:** All people have access to the resources they need to prevent injury and disease.

**Connection:** All people recognize the relationship between social determinants of health, and environmental, mental, and physical health.

**Exploration:** All people continuously look for ways to improve what isn't working in our health system while maintaining what is.

**Health Promotion Work at the Kittitas County Fair**

The KCHPD Health Promotion Division was a presence at the 2017 Kittitas County Fair with a breastfeeding location, Food Access Coalition (FAC) information, and a new code change for designated smoking/vaping areas.

KCPHD and the Kittitas County Breastfeeding Coalition provided a breastfeeding location for the fifth year at the

fair. Every year, the location receives numerous thank you comments and positive feedback. This year the room received the same positive comments along with a statement that it was a “great space to decompress with a special needs kiddo.”



FAC Board for Kittitas Fair

**DD Biennial Plan is Approved**

The Kittitas County Developmental Disabilities (DD) Program in partnership with the Kittitas County Developmental Disabilities

Advisory Committee (DDAC) has finalized the Kittitas County Developmental Disabilities 2017-19 Community Plan. The

Information in the plan ranges from governing principles, to consumer services, to service gaps and challenges in Kittitas County.



“At our core, we value each individual as a contributing member of our community”

Biennial Plan is intended to provide short term and long term goals for services provided via the DD Program and local services that are funded through the county.

The 2017-19 Biennial Plan can be found online via the Kittitas County website or you can request a written copy by contacting the Kittitas County Public Health Department.

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## Environmental Health Work at the Kittitas County Fair

An estimated 64,900 people attended the 2017 Kittitas County Fair this year in Ellensburg.

Thirty-nine vendors and concessionaires were providing “fair” food and beverages to that estimated 64,900 in attendance. Visitors love “fair food” with the variety of options, but each vendor at the Kittitas County Fair requires an inspection from the Kittitas County Public Health Department. Environmental Health Specialists Melissa Schumaier and Will Schwab completed inspections daily over the holiday weekend.

Vendors that are considered low risk (food that is commercially pre-packaged like pre-packaged burritos) were inspected once. Vendors who were moderate or high risk (cooking meat or hot holding potentially hazardous foods) were inspected every day of the fair.

Food safety practices that are expected during the fair are the same standards that are expected of restaurant personnel. KCPHD staff reported that food issues were fairly average with previous years, with the exception of some improper hot holding of potentially hazardous foods. For example, not holding meat at proper temperatures.



## Code Change and Fees to Increase Access to Mitigated Water

Since 2014, all new uses of ground water in Kittitas County require mitigation. KCPHD has been working to provide options for Kittitas County residents for mitigation, which would also satisfy the Washington State Growth Management Act and part of KCPHD’s effort to provide the most options is to allow for cisterns.

On September 21, the Kittitas County Board of Health and Board of County Commissioners approved code revisions to the Cistern Water System Requirements, which resulted in changes to additional codes such as Adequate Water Supply Determination, Mitigation and Metering, as well as KCPHD’s fee schedule and policy.

Ultimately, the revisions are intended to make it easier for homeowners to access water in areas that do not currently have a water bank available, also called a “red zone.”

Significant code changes are:

- Changing the licensing and inspection requirements for commercial potable water haulers from annually to every two years, and the reporting requirements from monthly to quarterly.

- Changing the cistern user reporting and water testing requirements from quarterly to annually.

- Removing the Interim Measure code language for Adequate Water Supply Determinations.

- Requiring that cistern users receive an Adequate Water Supply Determination (Form C) approval prior to receiving a building permit.

- Allowing cistern users to mitigate for water usage through the Kittitas County Water Bank and adding a new package C of 150 gallons per day (annual average) specifically for cistern users.

- Allowing recipients of mitigation certificates from the Kittitas County Water Bank two years (instead of one) to apply for a building permit.

<b>Environmental Health (EH)</b>	
EH Complaints	29
EH Incident Response	1
<b>Water Resources</b>	
Water Mitigation	
Certificates Issued	29
Water Mitigation Applications	34
Meter Inspections	8
<b>Drinking Water</b>	
Group A Water System	
Sanitary Surveys	4
Group B Water System	
Inspections	0
Individual Well Site Review Applications	39
Adequate Water Supply Determinations	71
Well Delegation Inspections	14
Well Site Inspections	3
<b>Solid Waste</b>	
Permits Issued	0
Inspections	2
<b>On Site Septic</b>	
Installation Permits Issued	86
Inspections	69
Finalized Permits Issued	42
Site Evaluations	95
<b>Land Use</b>	
New Land Use Applications	7
<b>Food Safety</b>	
Permanent Food Establishment	
Applications	74
Temporary Food Establishment	
Applications	46
Food Handler’s Permits	912
Permanent Food Establishment	
Inspections	123
Temporary Food Establishment	
Inspections	95
<b>Living Environment</b>	
Pool Facility Permits Issued	7
Pool Facility Inspections	19
Camps & Parks Permits Issued	13
Camps & Parks Inspections	12
School Inspections	3

? **Did you know** ?

- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), West Nile Virus (WNV) is most commonly spread by mosquitos.
- West Nile Virus can cause febrile illness, encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) or meningitis (inflammation of the lining of the brain and spinal cord).
- There are no vaccines or medications to treat WNV.
- 1 in 5 with an infection will develop a fever and other symptoms. 1 in 150 will develop serious or fatal illness.
- To avoid WNV, the most effective way is to avoid mosquito bites:
  - Use an EPA registered insect repellent.
  - Wear long sleeve shirts and pants.
  - Use window screens, netting, or air conditioning.
- In 2017, Kittitas County had one horse test positive for WNV.



## BOH Amends 8.24 to include Kittitas Valley Event Center

On August 17, the Kittitas County Board of Health (BOH) and the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) voted to amend the Kittitas County Chapter 8.24 to include designated smoking and vaping areas at the Kittitas Valley Event

Center. The code amendment applies to the Kittitas County Fairgrounds and may be invoked at any other event held at the event center that is open to the public. With the new amendment, designated smoking and vaping areas

were in effect for the 2017 Kittitas County Fair. The code requires individuals who wish to smoke and/or use an electronic vaping device to do so in a designated area.

## Foundational Public Health Service Funds

KCPHD staff is working on a plan to submit to the Washington State Department of Health for Foundational Public Health Services funds in order to fund activities for communicable disease related work. Some of the proposed activities include working

closer with schools and daycares regarding immunizations, STD prevention with youth, provider education on STD screening, increase/improve STD partner notification activities, and develop

and revise TB response policy and protocol.



## Accreditation and Policy Impact for Health Departments

Part of KCPHD's job, per accreditation standards, is to serve as a resource for policies that impact health. The expectation is that we will inform others of potential health impacts, whether it is a health related policy or not.

For example, in 2016, KCPHD was asked to provide information about the safety and use of reusable grocery

bags when the City of Ellensburg was considering a tax on plastic grocery bags.

Our role is to provide science based and current information in order for policies to be considered.

For example, in the case of public health impacts of reusable grocery bags, KCPHD asserted that the risk

of a significant negative health impact was likely to be low, though not impossible. KCPHD recommended that a policy that would increase the use of reusable grocery bags should be accompanied by education and outreach about proper cleaning of reusable grocery bags.